

# Technology and Integrated Discipline Engineering Services (TIDES)

## Questions and Responses

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1. **Question:** I would like to know if the RFP release date has been changed?

**Answer:** The RFP is scheduled to be released the week of October 20.

2. **Question:** Has the Competition Type changed?

**Answer:** No the competition type has not changed. The procurement is an 8a set-aside

3. **Question:** Will the contract type be a Firm Fixed Price, Cost Reimbursement?

**Answer:** The contract type is Cost Plus Fixed Fee.

4. **Question:** Any other information that can assist in creating a worthy proposal.

**Answer:** The necessary information needed to respond to the RFP is contained in the RFP and the electronic library.

5. **Question:** Will participants in the TIDES contract be prohibited or in any way disadvantaged in potential competitive procurements or solicitations related to work performed under the TIDES contract? In other words, if we have a team member that manufactures hardware for Goddard currently, will joining a TIDES team preclude them from future hardware sales?

**Response:** The Government has included NFS clause 1852.209-71, Limitation of Future Contracting, in the contract with the appropriate restrictions upon future contracting.

6. **Question:** Paragraph (a) and (c) reference the Service Contract Act (SCA). Will the SCA apply to the contract? If so, which area wage determination schedule will be used?

**Answer:** The Service Contract Act will not apply to this contract.

7. **Question:** The Government RFP States: Offerors shall include in their proposal the written consent of their proposed significant subcontractors to allow the Government to discuss the subcontractors' past performance evaluation with the Offeror. Would the government consider excluding the subcontractor's consent letters (authorizing the government to discuss teammates past performance the prime) from page count so as not to penalize companies that have opted to bid with teammates for the Government's benefit?

**Answer:** Upon release of the Final RFP the Government will exclude the consent letter from the page count with a page limitation NTE 1 page per response.

# Technology and Integrated Discipline Engineering Services (TIDES)

## Questions and Responses

---

8. **Question:** The RFP states. "...BOEs must be provided by that significant subcontract following the above specified format."

It is unclear what the "above specified format" is. Will the government please clarify what format they are referring to?

**Answer:** The "above specified format" is described in Clause L.15 2(g). All significant subcontracts shall follow the same format provide in Clause L.15 2(g) as described for the Prime.

9. **Question:** The second sentence of the 7th paragraph in both L and M starts off with "If significant subcontractors are proposed..."

Will the government clarify that all references to "subcontractors" thereafter in this paragraph actually apply only to "significant subcontractors"?

**Answer:** Upon release of the final RFP, the Government will revise this section (L.14.3 Subfactor B) to read as follows: "The offeror shall describe its strategy for using (or not using) significant subcontractors (based on the definition of a significant subcontractor in the cost volume instructions). If significant subcontractors are proposed, identify their interfaces to your organizational structure and provide: 1) a separate organization chart for each significant subcontractor, 2) the basis for selection of the significant subcontractor, including split of responsibilities and the potential percentages of work to be performed, 3) the nature and extent of the work to be performed by the significant subcontractor, 4) the benefits of these arrangements to the Government, and 5) methods of management and reporting to GSFC of significant subcontractors' financial and technical plans and performance. The offeror shall discuss its plans for addressing any problems that arise as a result of the proposed organization structure or poor and/or non-performance of subcontracted portions of the contract."

10. **Question:** The Presolicitation Notice dated April 25, 2014 stated this contract would have a maximum ordering value of \$148, 000,000. Section B.2 of the Draft RFP dated August 05, 2014 states the maximum ordering value at \$114,000,000. Can you clarify the maximum order value?

**Answer:** The maximum ordering value is \$114,000,000.

11. **Question:** If Company X is providing past performance references for a contract where they were a sub to Company Y, can Company X provide their Past Performance Questionnaire directly to their Government customer rather than to their Prime (Company Y)? The concern is that Company Y may unfairly evaluate Company X if Company X is on a competing team but must use their contract with Company Y for past performance.

# Technology and Integrated Discipline Engineering Services (TIDES)

## Questions and Responses

---

**Answer: A significant subcontractor may ask the government customer to evaluate their past Performance, however, a significant subcontractor must also provide information from its Prime.**

12. **Question:** Reference E.2. page 12, Is the reference correct, or should the standard be 9001:2008 or latest ISO quality standard?

**Answer: Yes this is the correct reference. However, subsequent tasks may require additional quality requirements.**

13. **Question:** Clause for Rights to Proposal Data has August 9, 2013 as the date which the contract is based. Should the date be removed and replaced with the submission date of the TIDES proposal?

**Answer: Upon the release of the final RFP, the Government will revise the date to be (TBD).**

14. **Question:** Observation: Appears that the Government would like written position descriptions as part of the 80-page mission suitability volume and are given the option to use incumbent personnel. However, Enclosure 5 presents approximately 10 pages of 8-point font descriptions. Will the Government consider removing the position descriptions from the Mission Suitability Volume page count and place the Position Descriptions with mapping in Volume II Cost Volume (as indicated in the table on page 93)?

**Answer: Upon release of the final RFP, the government will revise the Proposal Component table in Section L.12, Mission Suitability Volume to exclude the page limitations of the Position Descriptions with a limit of one page per description.**

15. **Question:** Observation: The Offeror shall instruct each of its references to return the questionnaire directly to the Government in a sealed envelope. Typically the questionnaire is allowed to be submitted to the Government via email. Will the Government allow an email submission?

**Answer: The Government will allow the questionnaire to be returned via email to the Contracting Officer.**

16. **Question:** Many items normally checked for property and services are not checked. Is this omission intentional or simply an oversight? Please clarify

**Answer: Section G.11 will be revised prior to the release of the final RFP.**

# Technology and Integrated Discipline Engineering Services (TIDES)

## Questions and Responses

---

17. **Question:** In April NASA published a TIDES schedule that cited 60 days between release of draft RFP to release of final RFP. Can you confirm this is still the case and the final RFP will be issued late September to early October?

**Answer: The final RFP will be released the week of October 20.**

18. **Question:** Can the offeror submit the Past Performance Citations at the Unclassified/For Official Use Only level? Also, can the offeror submit a Past Performance Citation at the TS/SCI level?

**Answer: The Source Evaluation Board does not have the capability to review restricted and classified information.**

19. **Question:** How will the contractor's process(es) and procedure(s) for initiating and managing new subcontracts, vendor agreements, purchasing agreements, etc., and the resultant reporting requirements, be captured in the RFP in order to fully account for the degree of subcontracting expected in this procurement.

Specifically, where in section L is the requirement and where in section M is the evaluation method stated that will capture this element of the procurement?

**Answer: The contractor's process(es) and procedure(s) for initiating and managing new subcontracts, vendor agreements, purchasing agreements, etc., and the resultant reporting requirements is generally covered in the management plan.**

20. **Question:** Based on the SOW requirements and work projected to be done at Goddard, top secret clearance work will be required. Will the government include the below clause in the final RFP?

Currently: TIDES DRFP I.99 is RESERVED. Will this be changed to: I.99 SECURITY CLASSIFICATION REQUIREMENTS (1852.204-75) (SEP 1989) Performance under this contract will involve access to and/or generation of classified information, work in a security area, or both, up to the level of Top Secret. See Federal Acquisition Regulation clause 52.204-2 in this contract and DD Form 254, Contract Security Classification Specification, Attachment D. Will Section L be changed to include: In accordance with Attachment D, Contract Security Classification Specification (DD 254), Offerors shall possess a Top Secret level facility security clearance for performance of this contract and this clearance shall be maintained throughout the life of the contract?

**Answer: The Government has reviewed the requirements of the SOW and has determined the following clause SECURITY CLASSIFICATION REQUIREMENTS (1852.204-75) (SEP 1989) is not necessary for performance of this contract.**

# Technology and Integrated Discipline Engineering Services (TIDES)

## Questions and Responses

---

21. **Question:** Would the government consider including in Section M, the proximity to Goddard of the manufacturing facilities? For example, for facilitation of government oversight, quality control/assurance, cost reduction associated with these?

Without a proximity evaluation, offerors could bid non-local manufacturing rates for non- incumbent personnel supported by lower non-local regional survey data to achieve a lower bid cost without taking into account the government's increased costs of oversight and quality control, thereby lowering the contractor's bid cost but increasing the government's costs?

**Answer: There is no proximity requirement in the RFP.**

22. **Question:** Will the government confirm that the position descriptions are to be included in the Vol. III, Cost Volume as stated in the L.12(b) (1) table and not in Vol. II, Mission Suitability?

If the government requires that position descriptions also be included in Vol II, Mission Suitability, will the government confirm that they are not included in the page count? Or if they are to be included in the Mission Suitability volume can we point to the position descriptions in the cost volume?

**Answer:**

**Upon release of the final RFP, the government will revise the Proposal Component table in Section L.12, Mission Suitability Volume to exclude the page limitations of the Position Descriptions.**

23. **Question:** The dRFP states "...The proposal shall include a matrix showing where in the proposal the technical requirements of the SOW and the evaluation criteria of this RFP are satisfied (i.e., the SOW elements versus Offeror's proposal page numbers)."

We do not see a requirement to address all requirements of the SOW (i.e., a section for "Understanding the SOW Requirements"). Please confirm this is correct. If so, please modify this clause accordingly. Also, please confirm that matrices are not required for Volumes I and III (Offer and Cost, respectively).

**Answer: The DRFP is correct, please refer to the cost section and cost Matrices required.**

24. **Question:** The GPM includes a Thermal Engineer 2 in its Exhibits. However there is no labor category description provided in Enclosure 5. Will the government please provide one?

**Answer: Upon release of the final RFP, the Government will revise Enclosure 5 to include the Thermal Engineer 2 position description.**

25. **Question:** Page 96 paragraph 2 contradicts the first sentence off L.15.1 Instructions.

# Technology and Integrated Discipline Engineering Services (TIDES)

## Questions and Responses

---

Section L.13(c) 1 last paragraph appears to contradict the first sentence of L.15.1 (instructions). Please clarify.

Is it the government's intent to only award to an offeror who has an accounting system that has been deemed acceptable for accumulating costs by a cognizant administrative office?

Will the government please define a cognizant administrative office?

**Answer: An acceptable accounting system is necessary for award.**

**Per FAR 42.003 for contractors other than educational institutions and nonprofit organizations, the cognizant Federal agency normally will be the agency with the largest dollar amount of negotiated contracts, including options. For educational institutions and nonprofit organizations, the cognizant Federal agency is established according to Subsection G.11 of OMB Circular A-21, Cost Principles for Educational Institutions, and Attachment A, Subsection E.2, of OMB Circular A-122, Cost Principles for Nonprofit Organizations, respectively.**

**Once a Federal agency assumes cognizance for a contractor, it should remain cognizant for at least 5 years to ensure continuity and ease of administration. If, at the end of the 5-year period, another agency has the largest dollar amount of negotiated contracts, including options, the two agencies shall coordinate and determine which will assume cognizance. However, if circumstances warrant it and the affected agencies agree, cognizance may transfer prior to the expiration of the 5-year period.**

26. **Question:** Will the Government be populating the Manufacturing “portions” of the GPM Exhibits? Specifically, the labor categories and the hours by labor categories.

**Answer: The Government will not be populating the Manufacturing “portions” of the GPM Exhibits. The contractor is not required to have a manufacturing site as part of this contract.**

27. **Question:** Since Section M evaluates only the interface of a significant subcontractor with the Prime versus evaluating the organizational chart of the significant subcontractor, would the government consider modifying the section L requirement, which requires offerors to provide separate org charts for each subcontractor? Specifically, would the government change the section L requirement to: “requiring offeror's to provide the interface between significant contractors and the Prime's organization?” This will align section L with section M.

**Answer: Upon release of the final RFP, the Government will revise this section to read as follows: “The offeror shall describe its strategy for using (or not using) significant subcontractors (based on the definition of a significant subcontractor in the cost volume instructions). If significant subcontractors are proposed, identify their interfaces to your organizational structure and provide: 1) a separate organization**

# Technology and Integrated Discipline Engineering Services (TIDES)

## Questions and Responses

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chart for each significant subcontractor, 2) the basis for selection of the significant subcontractor, including split of responsibilities and the potential percentages of work to be performed, 3) the nature and extent of the work to be performed by the significant subcontractor, 4) the benefits of these arrangements to the Government, and 5) methods of management and reporting to GSFC of significant subcontractors' financial and technical plans and performance. The offeror shall discuss its plans for addressing any problems that arise as a result of the proposed organization structure or poor and/or non-performance of subcontracted portions of the contract.”

28. **Question:** Enclosure 1, Representative Task Order 2 (RTO-2), Figure 1 – Alice Tech Demo Sat GN&C Block Diagram: Please define acronyms “ACE” and “CSS”.

**Answer:** ACE – Attitude Control Electronics and CSS – Coarse Sun Sensor, in addition, a list of acronyms will be included with the RTO’s.

29. **Question:** Will the Government provide the number of on-site seats available to house the anticipated workforce?

**Answer:** The Government will not provide the number of on-site seats available to house the anticipated workforce.

30. **Question:** Reference: L.12(b) page 92, Would the Government accept a proposal matrix for each volume indicating where proposal sections address the requirements, in addition to where the SOW references are found?

**Answer:** Yes, the Government will accept a proposal matrix for each volume indicating where proposal sections address the requirements, in addition to where the SOW references are found as part of your included page count.

31. **Question:** Reference: L.15 Exhibit 13E, The last paragraph states ... (BOE) given for the individual RTO giving the Government insight into the cost estimating thought process ....Are we correct in our assumption that the requirements is only for RTO-2?

**Answer:** Yes, this applies only to RTO 2

32. **Question:** Reference: M.3.1 Subfactor A page 122, The 2nd paragraph states ... phasing at both the sub-task level and the task level ....; however the “phasing” is not required in Section L. First, will the Government elaborate on the phasing (assuming resource phasing in a time/FYE format)?

**Answer:** Section L will be updated to incorporate the following:

**Section L.14.3:** Proposed staffing plan, including skill mix, level of staffing and staff phasing needed to accomplish the objectives.



# Technology and Integrated Discipline Engineering Services (TIDES)

## Questions and Responses

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**Section M.3.1: The Government will evaluate the technical approach, skill mix (labor categories and projected hours), level of staffing and staff phasing at both the sub-task level and the task level.**

33. **Question:** Period of performance begins April 1, 2015 before the anticipated start date of the TIDES contract given the June 29, 2015 phase-in date. Is the period of performance for RTO 1 correct?

**Answer: As RTO's are hypothetical situations, at this point, there is no plan to revise the dates.**

34. **Question:** Offerors shall include in their proposal the written consent of their proposed significant subcontractors to allow the Government to discuss the subcontractors' past performance evaluation with the Offeror. It is not clear whether this information must be included in page count. Would the Government please clarify?

**Answer: Upon release of the final RFP, the Government will revise the Proposal Component table with section L to exclude the written consent from the page count with limitations.**

35. **Question:** RTO 1 has 3 "Subtasks" with 14, 14, and 11 sub-activities respectively, while RTO 2 appears to have only one "Task" (with no specified "Subtask") and 16 sub-activities. We assume that RTO-2 has one "Task" with one "Subtask" and 16 sub-activities. Is this correct?

**Answer: Yes, your assumptions are correct. RTO-1 consist of 3 Tasks or Subtasks with 14, 14, and 11 sub-elements respectively. RTO-2 has one Task or Subtasks with 16 sub-elements. All assumptions made by the offeror should be provided in accordance to the instructions provided in section M.3.1 Subfactor A – Technical Approach for evaluation of RTO**

36. **Question:** The propulsion system in figure 2 is claimed to have been built offline. What does 'offline' mean in the description of where the propulsion system was built?

**Answer: In this situation, the word "offline" means that the propulsion system was built separately from the spacecraft.**

37. **Question: Reference RTO1:** Given that the System Integration Review is complete, and the only other Government provided milestone is that of launch, does the Government intend the contractor to support any programmatic reviews between these two events, or should offerors restrict themselves solely to support of the tasks provided?



# Technology and Integrated Discipline Engineering Services (TIDES)

## Questions and Responses

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**Answer:** The Government feels that adequate information has been provided in RTO-1 to address this question. All assumptions made by the offeror should be provided in accordance to the instructions provided in section M.3.1 Subfactor A – Technical Approach for evaluation of RTO.

38. **Reference RTO1 subtask 2 task 1:** This states that the contractor will generate test procedures based on existing test plans. Can the Government provide additional clarification regarding the test types that will have been planned for this spacecraft. The number, type, and duration of these tests will drive schedule and staffing. Offerors can assume this as part of their response, but additional clarification may allow for more consistent responses.

**Answer:** The Government feels that adequate information has been provided in RTO-1 to address this question. All assumptions made by the offeror should be provided in accordance to the instructions provided in section M.3.1 Subfactor A – Technical Approach for evaluation of RTO.

39. **Question:** Reference RTO2: This states that "final integration and testing will be performed mainly at Goddard facilities," however, the remainder of the task order does not make clear what additional facilities might be needed. If facilities beyond those at Goddard are anticipated, will the Government provide that clarification for RTO2?

**Answer:** Upon release of the final RFP, the Government will revise this sentence in RTO2 to read as follows: "final integration and testing of the spacecraft will be performed at Goddard facilities."

40. **Question: Reference NPR 8705.4 (Risk Classification for NASA Payloads):** Is the full definition of the Government's intent for risk Classification B contained in the referenced document? The risk classification B, and what risk levels the sponsors of each mission expect, is all laid out in the referenced NPR document? Or is there further documentation that guides what and how much risk is acceptable? (i.e, Shuttle had a 1:10,000 minimum launch failure risk, and loads of supporting docs to support that).

**Answer:** The RTO questions are hypothetical situations. The Government feels that the references provided are adequate information to address this question. All assumptions made by the offeror should be provided in accordance to the instructions provided in section M.3.1 Subfactor A – Technical Approach for evaluation of RTO.

# Technology and Integrated Discipline Engineering Services (TIDES)

## Questions and Responses

---

41. **Question: Reference RTO1:** In Table 1, it states, "Equatorial crossings move 30° W every 6 months." Is this an orbital maneuver or a planned effect of the orbit geometry (i.e., precession)? Assuming that is an orbital maneuver, is that a single maneuver every 6 months, or is it a frequent adjustment producing gradual change which totals 30 degrees every 6 months?

**Answer:** Upon release of the final RFP, the Government will revise RTO-1 as follows: The Mission Orbit, Longitude characteristics in Table 1 of RTO 1 was changed from, "Equatorial crossings move 30°W every six months" to "Maneuvers will move equatorial crossings by 30°W every six months." All assumptions made by the offeror should be provided in accordance to the instructions provided in section M.3.1 Subfactor A – Technical Approach for evaluation of RTO.

**Major maneuver operations will be performed every six months. Each operation will change the equatorial crossing by 30 degrees west.**

42. **Question: Reference RTO1.1:** In Figure 1, does ACE stand for Attitude Control Electronics?

**Answer: YES, ACE is an acronym for Attitude Control Electronics.**

43. **Question: Reference RTO1.1:** Will the Government provide more details about the "mission simulation scenarios" listed in task 9? Will flight hardware or hardware copies be involved in the simulation scenarios or will it be a computer simulation of all events and data streams?

**Answer:** At this time, the Government has no plan to provide more details about the "mission simulation scenarios" listed in task 9. The Government feels that the references provided are adequate information for addressing the RTO. All assumptions made by the offeror should be provided in accordance to the instructions provided in section M.3.1 Subfactor A – Technical Approach for evaluation of RTO.

44. **Question: Reference RTO1.2:** In task 9 and 10, are these the same Mission Simulations described in RTO 1.1, or additional?

**Answer:** The Mission Simulations identified in Subtask 2 and Subtask 3 of RTO-1 are the same Mission Simulations identified in Subtask 1 of RTO-1

# Technology and Integrated Discipline Engineering Services (TIDES)

## Questions and Responses

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45. **Question:** Also, will the Government provide more details about the "mission simulation scenarios" listed in task 9? Will flight hardware or hardware copies be involved in the simulation scenarios or will it be a computer simulation of all events and data streams?

**Answer:** At this time, the Government has no plan to provide more details about the "mission simulation scenarios" listed in task 9. The Government feels that adequate information has been provided to address these questions. All assumptions made by the offeror should be provided in accordance to the instructions provided in section M.3.1 Subfactor A – Technical Approach for evaluation of RTO.

46. **Question: Reference Section L, Past Performance:** Will the Government please verify its evaluation criteria for Past Performance submitted by a Joint Venture as the Prime Offeror?

It is our understanding that Past Performance of the Joint Venture partners at the prime level will be evaluated the same regardless of whether the past performance cited is that of the Majority partner 8(a) company or the Minority partner company of the Joint Venture. Please verify that this is a correct interpretation.

**Answer:** Your interpretation is correct, Past Performance of the Joint Venture partners at the prime level will be evaluated the same regardless of whether the past performance cited is that of the Majority partner 8(a) company or the Minority partner company of the Joint Venture.

47. **Observation:** Labor categories between the Position Descriptions (PDs) and the Government Pricing Model (GPM) do not match. Enclosure 5 has an Education Outreach Specialist that is not included on the GPM. The Electrical/Electronic Technician is called an Electrical Technician on the GPM for both 1 and 2 categories. The GN&C "Systems" Engineers are not on the GPM only GN&C Engineer 1, 2, 3, and Chief; The Junior Engineer is called an Engineer Junior on the GPM; and the Thermal Engineer 2 is missing from the GPM. Also, the PDs reference METS III in the Safety and Mission Assurance Manager PD.

**Response:** Upon release of the final RFP, the Government will make the following revisions:

### **Position Descriptions**

- adds Thermal Engineer 2 position description.
- changes Electrical/Electronics Engineer to Electrical Technician
- changes Junior Engineer to Engineer Junior

# Technology and Integrated Discipline Engineering Services (TIDES)

## Questions and Responses

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**Exhibit 2A will include the following:**

- **Education Outreach Specialist**
- **GN&C Systems Engineer 1**
- **GN&C Systems Engineer 2**
- **GN&C Systems Engineer 3**